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ABSTRACT

Two basic approaches to language treatment have been defined, the policy approach and the cultivation approach. The former deals with the selection of a national language, standardization, literacy, orthography, and the stratification of code varieties, and is a macro approach. The latter concerns correctness, efficiency, specialized functions, style, and communicative capacity, and is a micro approach. The case of Canada represents an instance of the overlapping of the two approaches. Following a brief description of Canada's internal political structures and responses to language problems at the federal level, the results of language planning activities in Canada are discussed in terms of three questions: (1) Is the public being served in the language of its choice? (2) Are the powers of the Language Commissioner and the power of the Official Languages Act broad enough to promote both official languages in all areas of the federal government? (3) Are public servants of French mother tongue increasingly using their language as a working language? The procedures for evaluating language planning policies are described, as well as recent developments. It is felt that in the present political juncture, the burden of responsibility falls on the provincial governments. (CLK)

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Language Treatment and Language Planning in Canada

Grant D. McConnell*

Present day sociolinguistic theory in its concern for language problems as such, hypothesizes a general treatment pattern (or patterns) based on a model (or models), within which one finds an overall plan (or plans) for treating the problem (or problems) involved. As well as postulating levels of treatment as being 1) rational (or otherwise), 2) theoretical (or ad hoc), 3) in depth (or otherwise) and arriving at an overall evaluation based on *rigour* we are led finally to two basic types of treatment (Neustupný 1974), which are neither entirely exclusive nor entirely interlocking, but which represent, each in its own way, a particular approach to language problems. These have been called the 1) *policy* and 2) *cultivation* approach and imply a system or a model of language treatment within which some kind of language planning and language problem solving can be undertaken. The characteristics of each of these approaches have been given in detail elsewhere: the former deals with a) selection of national language, b) standardization, c) literacy, d) orthography, e) intra-polity rank order of code varieties (stratification) and is said to be a macro approach; the latter deals with a) correctness, b) efficiency, c) specialized functions, d) style, e) communicative capacity and is said to be a micro approach. Although it is admitted that there is occasional overlapping of the two approaches (Canada, Belgium) when polities are involved, they are largely kept apart and the processes and descriptors themselves which constitute the structure of the model, are generally thought *not* to be iterative, rather each is postulated as a one-time-thing scaled along a time line from the most basic (or rudimentary) to the most refined (or specialized), hence, the identification of the policy approach with less developed (or underdeveloped) countries and the cultivation approach with developed or modern industrialized societies.

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Although the models themselves are useful and dichotomous, (or perhaps useful because dichotomous), their identification with a similar dichotomized model of developed vs. underdeveloped is, I think, an unfortunate overgeneralization and an unfair one at that. This is based on two premises:

1) That in spite of a polity being economically and industrially developed, it may have language problems that require solution and treatment from the policy model just as much as, *if not more so*, than a polity not in the 'modern industrialized society' bracket. This bracket is, of course, a rather vague concept but could exclude all polities outside the North American continent and Europe except Japan. Even therein, there are of course nuances of industrial and economic development. However, the important point here is that, within these polities, there are languages at many different levels of development which require both policy and cultivation approaches. Except, of course, if we emphasize the largely monolithic nations (Japan, Germany) or those giving or having given themselves a monolithic image linguistically and culturally (Canada, France, United Kingdom, Spain), to name just a few.

2) Taken on the level of language (code) and not on the level of a polity, one *cannot* presume that a particular code will not require at a particular moment, in time and space, elements from both approaches for its on-going development. Are we not, for an Aboriginal language of Australia, or an Amerindian language of Canada, concerned not only with a form of literacy but also with the correctness of this form as well? Going a step further, can we not also include 'linguistic levels concerning specialized functions' and 'constraints on communicative capacity' connected with these functions? Granted, the levels of specialization may be fewer and the context either different or less complex and the society simpler and (perhaps the greatest sin of all, or some would so think) not 'modern', but such a language will nevertheless undergo processes from both approaches at the same time, at different levels of development, in the Ausbau process. This whole process of language development is anything but simple, and part of its complexity or multiplexity is due to the varying contexts in which a code is to be found. Rate of growth is, of course, also affected by this same context with its concomitant external influences — political, social, economic, demographic and geographic. An outline of this growth can be found in a forthcoming publication (Kloss, McConnell 1977). The only languages purportedly not affected by this process of inner and outer growth and unfoldment (and even this is a somewhat gross generalization) are those few, which are implanted in a largely unilingual country, or if in a multilingual country, have attained a monopolistic position with regard to their status. Even in the above cases, one can argue for corpus planning and development which is a reflection of the cultivation approach. If, however, the status of a language is questioned — which is increasingly the case in a large number of developed western nations — then there is inevitably a return to a policy approach and in some cases, a dramatic return, as we will see below for Canada, a nation which, less than two decades ago, had no language policy or recognized language problems as such.

The above two language treatment approaches may, in fact, form the basis of an important typology of language treatment both from the policy and from the code point of view. They have been named in other times and places by different names but largely comprise the same functions and concepts. For example, *Innovative* and *Conservative* L.P. or the felicitous dichotomy named by H. Kloss in 1969, *Status* and *Corpus* L.P. An advantage of these terms is that they are unconnected with any subjective and evaluative measure of 'developed and underdeveloped, modern or non-modern', and use as a *point de repére* the code itself in its social and *langue-parole* dimensions. Further amplification of the above could yet be given, but for lack of space, we have come full circle and now turn to the case in point, i.e. Language Treatment and Planning in Canada.

From Theory to Practice

There may be nothing as valuable as a good theory, but there may be nothing so practical as a theory that works. The discussion above touched on two treatment approaches: *Policy* and *Cultivation*. Concerning the two official languages of Canada — English and French — we have a clear case of a *rapprochement* of the two approaches, more precisely, elements are being used from both treatment systems. In the *Policy* approach, selection of a national language(s) and problems of allocation and/or usage, and in the *Cultivation* approach, concern for problems of correctness, specialized functions and communication. The above 'mixed bag' is not an atypical case; in fact, we have tried to bring forth arguments above, indicating that it is rather the rule, both on the polity and code levels in both 'developing' and 'developed' countries. In the case of Canada, our main concern here is for French, which is undergoing both a *status* and *corpus* development, but, by far, the most important element is the former or in terms of our treatment model — the *Policy* approach, and yet, Canada is not generally considered to be an underdeveloped country and Québec Province, the heartland of the 'French fact' and French problem in spite of occasional rumblings, enjoys the creature comforts of North America as much as, and in some cases, more than other parts of Canada.

The Beginning Stages or Posing the Problem

As outlined in the introductory statement above, the only languages that are not going through this double process of status and corpus change are those that for a time reign supreme so that no language problem is visible or indeed even predictable. This was the case in Canada up until about the early 1960's and was the case in many other western and even eastern countries up until just a few short years ago. That is why so many countries with virtually no language problems, and consequently no language policy or planning, but a decade or two ago, are

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today having to cope with serious ones. Such is certainly the case for Canada. Language planning or language problems per se were hardly recognized as such even by the time the first full scale language commission — a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism — got under way in 1963 to "enquire into and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races". English-speaking Canadians, at that time, largely regarded the Commission as an unnecessary intrusion or an expensive frivolity. Shortly thereafter language planning with all its mechanisms of policy decisions, implementation, coordination and evaluation quickly came to the forefront from a one-time or some-time-thing, to a full-time national preoccupation if not a national obsession. Such is the situation today. The 'crisis', as it has been often called, is centered around the often asked and seldom answered question: "What does Québec want?", but the question itself, although to the point, is a politically viseral one and is not focused directly on our present concern of language planning. It has often been claimed that 'language' is not the center of the problem or crisis in Canada, that it is a purely political problem, based on ethnic and cultural diversity, with language playing a subsidiary role. It, of course, includes all these elements, but few would doubt the central role that language does play with all its concomitant ethnic, cultural and social dimensions.

A Short Description

For those unfamiliar with Canada's internal political structures, which, in turn, affect the structures and mechanisms of language planning bodies, it may be useful to mention the following facts. Canada is a federation of ten provinces, each with its own legislative and judicial bodies and has, in addition, two adjoining Northern territories. The provinces have sole control of all education and are united under a central government with its own legislative and judicial bodies at the federal level. Therefore, language planning bodies as such must operate either on the 1) federal level or 2) provincial level, and for the latter, language planning efforts vary from province to province usually in direct relationship to the size and importance of the French-speaking community. The following discussion will be based on a number of important aspects of language planning at the federal level and a discussion in a future issue will cover the provincial scene.

The Federal Level

As the Federal jurisdiction represents and is found in all provinces, it was perhaps natural that the first steps in formal language planning were undertaken by the Federal government, in response to a language problem that had arisen principally in Québec province, the only province having a majority of French-language speakers. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was the Federal government's response to a rapidly developing language (and political) problem centering on the status and viability of the French language, not only in Québec, but in the country as a whole. The result of this Commission was the setting up of the first piece of language legislation known as the Official Languages Act which was accepted and passed by all political parties in parliament in September 1969. This piece of legislation foresaw:

1) the setting up of bilingual districts throughout the country when warranted by minority language population numbers, although this was never carried out, cf. Duhamel and Fox Reports, 1971, 1975;
2) the creation of a post of Language Commissioner, whose duties were to see a) that all Canadians were properly *served* in the language of their choice in any and all Federal government institutes and in Parliament and b) that Canadians working for the Federal government would in no way be penalized because of the particular official language group to which they belonged. It did not necessarily follow that all persons speaking French as a mother tongue could insist on working in that language only, but it did allow, for a classification of unilingual and bilingual posts. The *aim* of the legislation was to officially create and subsequently work toward a *status* of equilibrium for the two official languages, and both languages were declared officially *equal*. This meant in practical terms that all government laws, acts, notices, etc. would be printed in both languages and the external image as well as services to the public would be in both languages. Finally, c) the Language Commissioner was to prepare a yearly report, not to a minister of the government, but to parliament. This allowed for open criticism of the government language policies and also for a yearly report of progress *toward* a status of equality for the two official languages. Section 25 of the Official Languages Act outlines the duties of the Commissioner as follows:

> *It is the duty of the Commissioner to take all actions and measures within his authority with a view to ensuring recognition of the status of each of the official languages and compliance with the spirit and intent of this Act in the administration of the affairs of the institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada and, for that purpose, to conduct and carry out investigations either on his own initiative or pursuant to any complaint made to him and to report and make recommendations with respect thereto as provided in this Act.*

The Results

After eight years of language planning activities at the Federal level, the Language Commissioner, Keith Spicer, in his last and sixth Report, mentioned an 80% success rate concerning the goals and objectives set out in the legislation, this in spite of some false starts and new beginnings. However that may be, the above legislation with regard to its final objectives and relative successes could be looked at from the following points of view:

1) *Concerning equality of the two official languages, is the public being served in the language of its choice?*
   In spite of a few grey areas, the answer is definitely yes, and in the final count, the situation is radically improved and quite positive as a whole.

2) *Are the powers of the Language Commissioner and ultimately the power of the Official Languages Act broad enough to promote both official languages in all areas of the Federal Government including its many agencies, departments and crown corporations?*

The powers of the Commissioner are quite wide concerning criticism (both verbal and written) of and consultation with government officials and agencies and include powers of investigation both within and outside government. However, recently (1976), during the airline pilots' and ground controllers' dispute in the nationally run airline, (crown corporation), the French language was temporarily disallowed by the Minister of Transportation as a working language for French mother tongue speakers, pending further investigation into the use and safety of bilingual air control. This raised a storm of protest with broad political repercussions which have not yet subsided and which have, among other things, brought into question the effectiveness of the Official Languages Act. This whole problem touches on the following and perhaps the most evasive and difficult point — that is the allocation of language use in the work sphere.

3) *Concerning equality of the two official languages, are public servants of French mother tongue increasingly using their language as a working language?*

The answer seems to be no. In addition, this seems to be a point on which there has been a great deal of misunderstanding as well as great expectations. Finally, it is a grey area, which probably more than any other, typifies the negative aspect or failure element in the Federal government's language planning program.

On June 23rd, 1970, the Prime Minister of Canada endorsed the general recommendations of the B & B Commission. In particular he predicted that French would become more and more a language of work in the Federal Public Service. In June 1973, the parliament adopted the Official Languages Resolution which set out basic principles to assist in the implementation of the Official Languages Act. The Act itself represented a general statement of language policy or intention whereas the Resolution set forth a plan of implementation and coordination. The objectives of the resolution were the same as in the Act, that is, based on: 1) *service* to the public in the language of their choice and 2) *language of work* in the Public Service, generally said to be in the 'language of the employee's choice'. The latter was, however, more of a fiction than a reality and involved a rather narrow interpretation of the 'language of work', i.e. restricted to bilingual geographic areas and concerned with equal job opportunities irregardless of mother tongue. In actual fact, the bilingual geographic areas are composed mainly of French mother tongue speakers, and it is these speakers that carry the burden of work in both official languages. The creation *en bloque* of bilingual posts tended to solidify this work habit. A monolingual or 'French essential' post category was also created, but most of these jobs (55%) fell into a lower echelon or 'operational' category, whereas only 0.3% were of the highest or 'executive' category. Even of the some 27,754 posts filled in 1974 of 'French essential' candidates, only 75% of these were classified as French language of work. Another 15% used both languages as language of work and 4% had English as the language of work. If the number of posts open to unilingual French speakers is on the increase, they still represent a small proportion of the unilingual posts offered to English speakers.

In order to counterbalance this linguistically lopsided civil service and to follow up its Resolution of 1973, the Federal government instituted a massive program for its employees of 1) language training, 2) language testing and 3) language job classification under the dual sponsorship of the Public Service Commission, for training and testing, and the Treasury Board, for policy and management. The Resolution was well intentioned, but the results were hardly encouraging and to many did not warrant the energy expended nor the heavy costs incurred. Because English-speaking employees were largely monolingual, the burden of the program lay on their heads and perhaps this led to the expression, which later became more generalized, of 'stuffing French down our throats'. However, that may be, and in spite of the fact that English-speaking employees admittedly had some catching up to do in their ability to speak the other official language, the results obtained could hardly be shown for their full worth, as most English-speaking employees, once they had grasped a fundamental command of the French language, were more often than not deprived of the chance of using it once they returned to their jobs after language training which, as the program went on, was extended in some case to a full year.

The government, in recognition of the above facts, announced in August 1975 further directives on the language of work, including the setting up of French work units within the national capital region and directives on the translation and use of work material. The French work units never got beyond the experimental stage and became politically a 'bone of contention'.

Evaluation

Evaluation is an all important but subtle step in language planning (Rubin 1971). Language planning in Canada at the Federal level went through an initial period (1970-1974) of formation, in which general policy was first set down and administrative structures were created in order to implement and coordinate the carrying out of this policy. During this period, the only administrative instrument available at regular intervals for the *evaluation* of this policy was in the Office of the Language Commissioner, who had at his disposal: 1) A Complaints Service and 2) A Special Studies Service. Although this represented an invaluable instrument of evaluation, a global and general evaluation could only be made in the last count by the government itself involving both politicians and upper administration as well as independent specialists. Such an eval-

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uation was carried out by a group of such specialists for the government, and their report was made available in August 1976 (cf. Bibeau Report 1976). In the light of this report, which was quite critical of the present lingustic policy, the government has, for the past year, been going through an important period of study and reflection in order to 'adjust its aim'. Some tentative conclusions can be drawn concerning future probable initiatives:

1) There will be a greater emphasis on the language of work concerning French in bilingual geographic areas and especially in Québec province.
2) The number of French language employees will continue to increase until they arrive at an equitable representation.
3) Massive bilingual programs, especially aimed at monolingual English-speaking employees, will be reduced in size and become more selective.
4) The Secretary of State will continue, through its language and cultural promotion programs, to finance: a) second language teaching in primary and secondary schools in the other official language and b) official minority language[1] conservation for pupils at the primary and secondary level, as well as support for teacher training institutes and teachers in official minority language areas.

The second period (1975-1978) will have been a critical period of evaluation, both of the overall goals or general policy as such, as well as the most effective means at arriving at these goals. There are really two language-type policies — one of intentions (general policy) and the other of means (working policy), and both are being critically examined and reevaluated at the Federal level.

Although policy and language planning has always gone ahead at the Federal level on its own initiative, it cannot ignore nor be politically innocent of policy and planning that is and has been going on in Québec province and in other parts of Canada over approximately the same period of time. Recent events seem to indicate that such has not been the case. In June 1977, the Parliament of Canada proposed eight main principles as the basis of its Official Languages Policy, now called the Federal Language Charter. This is part and parcel of the 'reorientation' program announced in October 1976 by the government and will include a redefinition of its policies within the Civil Service by the end of this year. One of the main principles outlined, is the right of all Canadians to have their children taught in the official language of their choice. It is stated further that facilities should be made available for this whenever there is a sufficient demand 'except in special circumstances'. Although the Federal government seems willing to recognize Québec as a special case, the principle is diametrically opposed to the presently proposed policy as formulated by the (separatist) government of Québec. Language policy there is presently and increasingly oriented towards French unilingualism in that province. As we shall see in a following article, this is based on the Québec government claim that French is a threatened, dominated and weak language. Weak in a relative sense, of course, in terms of the omnipresent English language on the North American continent. Nor do French speakers feel the question should be posed in terms of mere survival, rather it is a question of the full blossoming or unfolding of the French language and culture within the present or new political structures.

Latest Developments

More recently, Canadians have been passing through a period of evaluation and rapid change in language planning. In the past four months, two proposed language charters have appeared — first in the form of Bill 1, otherwise known as the 'Charte de la langue francaise au Québec' and, more recently, the new Federal Language Charter. The latter seems to explicitly recognize the difficult situation of the French language and the particular need for future language planning and protection in Québec. It also explicitly recognizes the weak position of the French language outside of Québec and calls for a united provincial-federal effort, especially in the other provinces, to bolster its present position.

In the present political juncture, the burden of responsibility falls heavily on the provincial governments for their luke-warm support of language planning programs. There have been improvements, but they have been timid. The historically unilingual and melting-pot image has stuck or has been remarkably persistant on the provincial level. French can no longer be treated either nationally or provincially as 'just another language'. Its political weight is already being felt. Whether its influence will expand until it takes its just place in the Canadian federation or whether it will be confined perhaps precariously in Québec, in an independent state, is the question at the heart of the present political battle and, of course, at the heart of language planning itself.

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[1] *The official minority language is English in Québec province and French in all other provinces.*